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**HOUSE MEMORIAL 71**

**47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2005**

**INTRODUCED BY**

**Dona G. Irwin**

**A MEMORIAL**

**REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE  
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE NAVAJO NATION, DINE POWER AUTHORITY  
AND THE DESERT ROCK ENERGY PROJECT IN NORTHERN NEW MEXICO.**

**WHEREAS, the top three employers on the Navajo Nation are  
involved in energy production and mining; and**

**WHEREAS, the desert rock energy project, located near the  
BHP-Billiton Navajo mine, will help absorb workers from the  
proposed closing of the Pittsburg and Midway mine northwest of  
Gallup; and**

**WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation may face budget shortfalls and  
job losses when a coal-fired electric plant in Laughlin,  
Nevada, shuts down for a period of years for plant upgrades;  
and**

**WHEREAS, the technology planned for the desert rock energy**

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1 project is state-of-the-art and will provide significant  
2 increases in air pollution control above the level of the  
3 current technology used in the four corners and the San Juan  
4 coal-fired electrical generating plants currently in the four  
5 corners area; and

6 WHEREAS, the desert rock energy project will use dry-  
7 cooling technology, will conserve water and will use  
8 approximately eighty-five percent less water than older power  
9 plants with traditional cooling technology; and

10 WHEREAS, the desert rock energy project will use coal from  
11 the BHP-Billiton Navajo mine; and

12 WHEREAS, the desert rock energy project will permit  
13 significant equity ownership by the Navajo Nation; and

14 WHEREAS, the desert rock energy project is expected to  
15 generate over one billion dollars (\$1,000,000,000) in total  
16 revenue for the Navajo Nation through 2033, or approximately  
17 fifty-two million dollars (\$52,000,000) per year from a variety  
18 of sources, including coal royalties, coal sales taxes,  
19 possessory interest tax, business activity tax, water sales and  
20 land leases; and

21 WHEREAS, the desert rock energy project is expected to  
22 create over two thousand construction jobs, contributing to the  
23 local economy during the construction phase, and up to four  
24 hundred jobs when construction is complete;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF

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1 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary  
2 of economic development be encouraged to assist with long-term  
3 planning for infrastructure development to accompany the desert  
4 rock energy project, including training, housing and business  
5 development planning; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interim Indian affairs  
7 committee, the economic and rural development and  
8 telecommunications committee and the water and natural  
9 resources committee include scheduling a status report of the  
10 desert rock energy project in their work plans; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be  
12 transmitted to the secretary of economic development and the  
13 secretary of environment.